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Interactive styles as a means of effective esl teaching

In the new age of ESL education, interaction has become one of its core components. The concept ‘interaction’ has been thoroughly studied and developed by such researches, as Leo Vygotsky, Leo van Lier, David Nunen, Kenneth D. Moore, H. Douglas Brown etc. They define ‘interaction’ as a co-operative work, the result of which lies in the completion of common linguistic task, and in the production of positive interpersonal effect of the participants of co-operation.

According to Kenneth D. Moore¹, teaching is not a matter of teachers talking and students listening. Effective teaching implies various interaction styles of teacher-student co-operation that are to be skillfully designed. There are four basic interaction styles: 1) teacher-group; 2) teacher-student; 3) student-student; and 4) student-group.

- Teacher-group style presupposes the work of a teacher with the whole group of students. It should be used when a lecture is given or a presentation of new language material is being made.

- Teacher-student style underlines the work of a teacher with a particular student. It is often called ‘The Ping-Pong style’. It reduces the teacher-student communication to the teacher’s questions and the student’s answers.

- Student-student style requires the work of single students in terms of one student’s questions/ comments, and another student’s clarification / explanation. This style frees the teacher from a controlling role in the class, and lets students take part in peer education.

- Student-group style suggests the leadership of one student. The task of a teacher is to create a comfortable environment in the classroom, where one student could lead and the others could be led by him or her.

To sum up, effective ESL teaching is best realized through creative combination of four interaction styles.

1. Kenneth D. Moore. Classroom Teaching Skills. McGraw-Hill. 4th edition., 1988. p.p.11 – 245